

for the refugee crisis. He said, "Our obligation was to give the Iraqis new institutions and provide security. We have fulfilled that obligation. I don't think we have an obligation to compensate for the hardships of war."

This is the kind of arrogance, Mr. Speaker, that has destroyed America's reputation and credibility around the world. We must reclaim our moral leadership. We can start by helping the Iraqi refugees. It's the right thing to do. It's the right thing to do as we bring our troops home.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Oregon (Mr. DEFAZIO) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Mr. DEFAZIO addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from New York (Mrs. MCCARTHY) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Mrs. MCCARTHY of New York addressed the House. Her remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Ohio (Ms. KAPTUR) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Ms. KAPTUR addressed the House. Her remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from California (Mr. SCHIFF) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Mr. SCHIFF addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

ON IRAQ, WE NEED LEADERSHIP, NOT INEFFECTIVE COMPROMISE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Maine (Mr. ALLEN) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. ALLEN. Mr. Speaker, Americans are aching for our leadership to end the war in Iraq. Instead, they find the President and his enablers in the House and Senate doing everything they can to block legislation that would require him to bring the troops home by a date certain. Each day seems to bring some new proposal that purports to be progress.

Upon examination, however, they leave the President free to pursue his discredited policies and serve his diversionary tactics by politicians searching for cover. One proposal calls for the President to submit a plan by mid-October to narrow the use of U.S. troops in Iraq to fighting terrorists and securing borders and U.S. interests. It won't bring home a single American serviceman or woman.

Another proposal seeks to "change the mission" of American forces, but doesn't guarantee when or even if their redeployment will begin. Supporters of "changing the mission" claim it would result in troop reductions, but they offer no evidence of that. Americans will remain the targets of violence, and U.S. policy will continue to sow resentment in the Muslim world. In my opinion, "changing the mission" is the war supporters' latest excuse to avoid decisive action to bring the war to a conclusion.

This is not the leadership the American people expect and that our national security demands. The failure of the President's surge strategy means he has lost the ability to shape events in Iraq in a positive direction. Only by redeploying our forces from Iraq can we rebuild our depleted military, restore our global reputation and redirect resources to fight al Qaeda.

Just last week, the National Counterterrorism Center reported that al Qaeda has regrouped in the Afghanistan-Pakistan border region, enabled by the President's diversion of resources to Iraq.

I opposed the Iraq war from the start and take no comfort in the fact that many of my most ominous predictions have proven true. In a September 6, 2002, op-ed in the Portland Press Herald, I predicted that the war would be fought "in city streets filled with civilians, making precision bombs useless and casualties high. It will cost billions to wage the war and billions more to rebuild."

America has suffered nearly 30,000 casualties, including more than 3,600 combat deaths. The war has cost half a trillion dollars, resulting in huge deficits that will burden our children's future.

On October 8, 2002, during the House debate on the war resolution, I said, "If the U.S. acts unilaterally or with just a few other nations, there is a far higher risk of fueling resentment in Arab and Muslim nations and swelling the ranks of the anti-U.S. terrorists." Unfortunately, this is exactly what has happened.

I voted against the war and have been an outspoken critic of the case made to justify it, the mismanagement of the occupation and the failure to hold the administration accountable for its so many mistakes.

More than 18 months ago, I called for a deadline to redeploy our forces. A firm deadline was, and is, the best way to end the U.S. involvement in Iraq and force the Iraqis to assume responsibility for their own security. As former Maine Senator George Mitchell demonstrated in his Northern Ireland diplomacy, a firm deadline can be a very effective way to get parties in conflict to compromise their differences.

Nothing but the force of law will move President Bush to alter his stay-the-course strategy. Nonbinding resolutions are not sufficient to compel a real change in policy and get us out of

Iraq. This President is stubbornly determined to delay the inevitable at the cost of additional precious American lives. More than 600 of our troops have died since the surge began.

The other costs include greater hatred of the U.S. in the Islamic world, more terrorists inspired by that hatred and, with our Armed Forces stretched to the breaking point, great insecurity for our Nation.

Unless Members of Congress who supported President Bush's war policy steadfastly for 5 years stop looking for cover and do the right thing, the President will prevail and our troops will remain in Iraq.

Our Armed Forces have done all that we asked of them and have performed their mission with great skill and courage. President Bush will keep our troops in the crossfire of the Iraqi civil war until Congress sets binding dates for their redeployment. That action represents the leadership needed to bring our troops safely home.

CLEANING UP FEMA

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Tennessee (Mr. COHEN) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. COHEN. Mr. Speaker, on the 3rd of July in my hometown of Memphis, Tennessee, I discovered there was ice being disposed of by being dumped on a driveway, more or less, at Spottswood and East Parkway. What that was about was FEMA dropping and disposing of ice.

FEMA had purchased thousands and thousands and thousands of pounds of ice after Hurricanes Katrina and Rita when they didn't have enough ice. To try to compensate, they bought way, way, way too much ice.

I have discovered that FEMA spent in purchasing, in transporting and in storing ice in 23 different American cities, Mr. Speaker, \$67 million of our taxpayers' money, and FEMA is now spending nearly \$4 million to dispose of that ice over a period of 11 months. That means over \$70 million of American taxpayer dollars going down the drain. That is not the way an American government or any government should work, any business should work, or what Americans should expect of their government.

Fortunately, this Democratic Congress is doing what legislative branches are supposed to do; oversight. We have lacked oversight for the last 6 years, Mr. Speaker, and faults of the administration have gone unnoticed. But as I deal on the subcommittee that deals with FEMA, I will see to it on August 29th when that subcommittee meets in New Orleans on the second anniversary of that horrendous event, Hurricane Katrina, that we will ask the director of FEMA and the others about their programs, of why they buy excess commodities and excess ice, of why they spent \$70 million of American taxpayers' money on an ice folly, and why